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To: [Arcaute](#)
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CC:
Date: 5/15/2013 10:25:17 AM
Subject: FW: Kalamazoo River - Allied OU - WMUK Radio Interview

FYI

From: Bucholtz, Paul (DEQ) [BUCHOLTZP@michigan.gov]
Sent: Tuesday, May 14, 2013 3:56 PM
To: Saric, James; Berkoff, Michael
Cc: Frey, Rebecca
Subject: FW: Kalamazoo River - Allied OU - WMUK Radio Interview

FYI, I hope I came close to capturing the essence of the interview...

From: Bucholtz, Paul (DEQ)
Sent: Tuesday, May 14, 2013 4:19 PM
To: Wurfel, Brad (DEQ)
Cc: Wagner, Robert (DEQ); Erickson, Susan (DEQ); Sackrider, Sarah (DEQ); Winters, Bobbie Jo (DEQ); Devantier, Daria W. (DEQ); Kline, David (DEQ); Lawton, Patricia (DEQ); Chamberlain, Kathleen (DEQ) (CHAMBERLAINK1@michigan.gov); Gonzales-Gray, Gloria (DEQ)
Subject: Kalamazoo River - Allied OU - WMUK Radio Interview

Brad,

The following is a summary of the phone interview I had today with Rebecca Thiele of WMUK in Kalamazoo. I wrote down as much as I could remember, as taking notes during this process is difficult at best. Let me know if you have any questions. I'm sure we will be in touch as this process moves forward.

Rebecca's questions in Italics, my responses follow.

What is DEQs role on site with EPA as the lead?

Started with MDEQ mission statement, saying the Allied OU is "What we do". I explained that EPA is the lead agency and MDEQ is a support agency. We basically go through the process with EPA and make sure the state's interests are considered in the process.

The report indicates that levels are above criteria: what does that mean?

The MDEQ wrote the report in 2008, and we feel that the document does a great job of describing the site conditions. We looked at what contaminants are present, where they are located and the levels we find them at. Basically what we found is that something needs to be done at the site to make it safe.

A lot of talk in the public about PCBs in GW at the site: How do they move around?

Writing the report taught us a lot about how PCBs move. One thing we found is that PCBs don't like to move in the GW, they tend to get caught and hung up in stuff. So we are concerned about them moving the short distance to the creek, but we feel that the City well fields are safe.

A lot of people grow gardens, but plants don't take up much, except for squash etc.: are people safe?

We feel that the report gives us a good understanding of where the contaminants are and we want to work with EPA to implement a remedy that makes sure people can safely grow gardens and we don't have gardens where they shouldn't be.

The documents refer to an MDL Criteria of 0.5 ppb in gw: is that low? It sounds low?

The criteria to protect people from these contaminants are very low. The 0.5 ppb criteria are for GW and the criteria to protect surface water are even lower at 0.2 ppb. We feel like the most sensitive area at the site is the creek, so we have low level criteria to protect for that.

The report indicates that levels in the surface water and fish are still not safe for people: how will that be addressed?

We know that some of these levels are elevated, but the Bryant Mill Pond clean-up had a major impact at the site. We dramatically reduced sediment, surface water, and fish tissue. The levels are now way lower than they were, and are closer to background conditions. This information shows that there is still more to do to protect the creek.

What is the timing for EPA's plan, and why has it taken so many years?

Back in 2008, the EPA knew the city had concerns about the well field area. EPA worked with the city to understand those concerns and came to the conclusion that the water isn't really moving to the city well field. That took some extra time, but now EPA is ready to move forward with doing something at the site and we can expect that EPA will be working with the City and local residents through this summer to come up with a plan.

There are other places like the Allied site, but they don't have a plan in place yet, do they?

The site consists of 80 river miles from Morrow Dam to Lake Michigan and includes about 3.5 miles of portage creek starting at Cork Street. On the river we have 4 of what we call operable units. They include King Highway Landfill, Willow, and 12 St in Plainwell. For these other operable units, the material was capped and is being monitored to make sure the GW isn't contaminated, again it is the short distance to the surface water that is the concern for the GW.

What is the MDEQ position on the Dams on the river?

We were happy to be part of the Plainwell cleanup that resulted in the removal of that dam in 2009. We would like to see all of the dams removed so that the issue doesn't continue into the future.

Other notes:

At some point during the interview, I made a comment that monitoring was part of these sites and they are monitored into the future to make sure that the remedies remain protective and that conditions don't change.

OVERALL

The interview went smoothly with no follow up questions, she informed me that she is intending this to be part of a larger series and plans to talk with EPA and has been in contact with member of the public and city officials. A broadcast date has not been set.

Paul Bucholtz
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